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LIBRARY JOURNAL

JUNE 15, 1987

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Citizen Access to Legal Information
A Merit Pay Plan for Public Libraries
Have You Hugged Your Mail Clerk Today?

THE INVISIBLE MANAGERS

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What is a professional? Some thoughts from a library mailperson, and considerations of our "invisible managers" in features beginning on page 27. Illustration by Harley Goode

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Final Report on *LJ*/EPA Classics Project

The Scarlet Letter leads the pack of classic paperbacks in a survey conducted from July to December 1986, "an unabashed attempt to prove that classics will circulate from public libraries, if properly displayed" (*LJ*, July 1986, p. 20). Mounted by *LJ*, the Educational Paperback Association, and four major publishers, the project placed collections of paperback classics and display racks in U.S. and Canadian public libraries. The titles and racks were donated by Bantam Books, Pocket Books, New American Library, and Viking Penguin.

Our interim report (September 15, 1986, p. 26) showed encouraging results: practically every title circulated at least once in each library. Now the final tabulations are in from John Michel, president of Florida Educational Paperbacks, who has been reporting to *LJ* on the progress of the project. Only 14 libraries actually completed the project, and each had a monthly circulation of at least 10,000. Each library was supplied with 58 titles and a display rack.

According to Michel, circulation was highest during August and September when many school's curricula include a number of these classics in their literature programs. The lower circulations, besides those of Shakespeare's plays, are largely due to the unavailability of the titles because of late shipping or complete exclusion from certain libraries, Michel reports. With full shipping, total circulation for those titles would have been higher.

Michel says, "Without a doubt, this may indicate a rejuvenation in interest of classic literature. The libraries . . . reported a full range of patrons, from students to career men and women to retirees . . . . This 'marketing' of classic literature to the reading public will help insure that these titles are not lost and will remain a cornerstone of great literature."

Classics Circulation Report

Title	*Jul.*	*Aug.*	*Sept.*	*Oct.*	*Nov.*	*Dec.*	*Total*
The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn	55	69	45	47	43	41	300
The Adventures of Tom Sawyer	39	46	32	27	15	17	176
Anna Karenina	36	37	39	44	17	24	197
Beowulf	27	26	21	17	21	16	128
Billy Budd . . .	10	9	13	16	6	11	65
The Call of the Wild . . .	33	28	31	31	19	28	170
Candide	21	27	25	25	24	16	138
The Canterbury Tales	22	37	42	30	33	29	193
Complete Plays of Sophocles	7	7	13	4	6	7	44
Crime and Punishment	44	42	32	31	19	22	187
Don Quixote	21	21	28	23	24	22	139
Four Major Plays (Ibsen)	14	19	24	13	19	10	99
Frankenstein	33	38	36	55	50	26	238
Hard Times	36	47	46	38	22	35	224
Julius Caesar	9	14	14	10	8	8	63
Kidnapped	38	42	32	35	26	29	202
King Lear	7	9	26	14	8	9	73
Les Miserables	33	45	51	38	28	31	226
Lord Jim	16	27	30	18	14	15	120
Macbeth	19	31	29	18	15	18	130
Madame Bovary	46	54	46	39	20	29	234
Mansfield Park	51	50	47	37	24	30	239
The Mayor of Casterbridge	39	34	35	34	25	25	192
The Merchant of Venice	8	11	10	6	3	5	43
A Midsummer Night's Dream	17	30	33	16	14	14	124
Moby Dick	40	43	54	31	21	27	216
Moll Flanders	38	40	32	26	19	22	177
Much Ado About Nothing	11	19	12	8	7	10	67
The Odyssey	30	33	35	29	22	20	169
Oedipus the King	5	15	21	17	16	13	87
Oliver Twist	32	40	54	31	24	25	206
The Orestian Trilogy	1	1	1	1	1	1	6
Othello	7	12	24	7	5	5	61
Paradise Lost . . .	20	22	27	16	18	15	118
Picture of Dorian Gray . . .	28	30	39	29	25	29	180
Pride and Prejudice	67	72	53	65	56	31	344
The Prince	25	21	25	18	22	15	126
The Red Badge of Courage	35	46	35	33	21	23	193
Robinson Crusoe	14	10	13	8	1	1	47
Romeo and Juliet	14	28	23	18	19	12	114
The Scarlet Letter	62	65	76	72	114	45	434
The Sea Wolf	38	43	39	37	28	23	208
Silas Marner	44	57	53	49	28	22	253
Sister Carrie	61	60	49	47	45	47	309
Sons and Lovers	53	54	56	42	52	49	306
A Tale of Two Cities	33	47	45	28	27	30	210
The Taming of the Shrew	15	6	15	16	13	12	77
Tess of the D'Urbervilles	61	69	69	46	40	33	317
The Three Musketeers	29	43	26	22	20	16	156
The Three Theban Plays	9	8	18	7	10	4	56
The Time Machine	41	52	38	33	27	13	204
Treasure Island	31	35	29	26	22	21	164
The Turn of the Screw . . .	39	35	40	34	18	16	182
20,000 Leagues Under the Sea	31	37	26	22	16	15	147
Vanity Fair	53	47	58	45	32	41	276
Walden . . .	46	57	43	36	27	27	236
War and Peace	38	37	45	29	32	17	198
Wuthering Heights	51	64	72	43	93	36	359
TOTAL	1780	2048	2024	1637	1425	1233	10,147

Circulation Figures

Avg. Circ per Title/Yr.: 174.95
Avg. Mean Circ per Title/Yr.: 176.5
Avg. Circ per Month: 1691.17
Avg. Title Circ per Month: Jul. 30.69; Aug. 35.31; Sept. 34.90; Oct. 28.22; Nov. 24.57; Dec. 21.26
Avg. Total Circ per Lib.: 724.79
Avg. Title (Single) per Lib.: 12.5
Avg. Monthly Circ per Lib.: 120.8
Avg. Circ per Month per Lib.: Jul. 127.14; Aug. 146.30; Sept. 144.55; Oct. 116.93; Nov. 101.89; Dec. 88.70

Top Ten Circulators

Rank	Title	Circ
1	The Scarlet Letter	434
2	Wuthering Heights	359
3	Pride and Prejudice	344
4	Tess of the D'Urbervilles	317
5	Sister Carrie	309
6	Sons and Lovers	306
7	Adventures of Huckleberry Finn	300
8	Vanity Fair	276
9	Silas Marner	253
10	Mansfield Park	239

Bottom Ten Circulators

Rank	Title	Circ
58	The Orestian Trilogy	6
57	The Merchant of Venice	43
56	Complete Plays of Sophocles	44
55	Robinson Crusoe	47
54	The Three Theban Plays	56
53	Othello	61
52	Julius Caesar	63
51	Billy Budd	65
50	Much Ado About Nothing	67
49	King Lear	73

Administrative specialists often handle personnel, finance, public relations, etc. Many want to work elsewhere. They are

The Public Library's Invisible Managers

By Barbara B. Moran & Peter A. Neenan

AS PUBLIC LIBRARIES have grown in size and complexity, greater demands have been placed on the men and women who direct them. Increasingly, library directors have felt a need to recruit specialized administrators with expertise in areas such as personnel, finance, planning, and systems analysis to assist them in their administrative duties.

Today many large public libraries employ a number of these specialized staff members who are not involved in the actual task of providing direct library services, but who serve in a support or staff position in library administration. Many of these specialty positions require backgrounds, skills, and competencies that have not typically been taught in programs of professional education for librarianship.

Barbara B. Moran and Peter A. Neenan are Assistant Professors, School of Library Science, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Questions about specialists

Although there has been a general awareness in the library profession that this specialized administrative component has greatly increased in numbers during the past few decades, there is no existing research that examines the individual characteristics of this body of specialists in large public libraries.[1]

Are these specialized administrators usually librarians who have acquired the necessary skills on the job or by further education, or are they more frequently nonlibrarians who have brought their skills from other organizations into libraries?

Regardless of background, do they now see themselves as librarians or as members of other professions? What career patterns typically lead to such positions? Which of these specialty administrative positions are most common in large public libraries? How satisfied are the incumbents in these positions and what are their future career goals? It was to answer questions such as these that this research was undertaken.

The sample and the study

Since it seemed likely that the heaviest concentration of these specialty administrative positions would be found in larger public libraries, this study was limited to public libraries serving cities with populations over 100,000. Census data for 1980 identified 173 such cities.

Administrators holding specialty positions were chosen from the listings in the 1983 *American Library Directory*. Any administrative positions which did not relate to the direct provision of library service, but instead provided specialized support for library administration, were included. For instance, a head of bookmobile services would not be included, but a personnel director, public relations officer, or business manager would.

One hundred and ten individuals from 49 libraries and library systems were identified as holding specialty administrative positions in these large public libraries. A questionnaire was drawn up, pretested on a group of specialty administrators in public libraries in smaller communities, revised, and mailed to the 110 specialty administrators in November 1983.

After returns began to come in, seven names had to be removed from the original list either because the position they had held was vacant or had been abolished (six cases) or because

the respondent's job, despite its title, was not a specialty administrative position (one case). There were 74 responses to the survey resulting in an overall response rate of 71.8 percent.

The positions held

The most frequently held positions are those dealing with personnel and 23 percent (n=17) of the respondents fall into this category. They hold positions such as personnel director or head of personnel, and their duties typically consist of policy setting, hiring, and working with personnel problems.

Next in number are individuals identified as holding general administrative positions, excluding assistant and associate directors who are not considered part of the specialty administrators group. These 15 individuals (20 percent) hold such titles as administrative services librarian or executive assistant and their jobs consist of responsibilities in the administration of the entire library, usually acting to remove some of the administrative detail from the shoulders of the library director.

director. Twelve percent report to someone else, usually a department or division head.

Although these positions are almost all staff positions, most of the incumbents (93 percent) supervise others, most frequently clerical. Fifty-eight (78 percent) report supervising clerical staff, with an average of five such workers supervised. Just under half report they supervise professional staff (n=35, 47 percent), while 22 (30 percent) supervise paraprofessionals (see Table 2).

Mostly male, not "librarians"

One purpose of this study was to ascertain the professional self-identification of the people holding these positions. It is interesting to note that the majority of them do *not* think of themselves as librarians. In responding to a question that asked them to identify their profession, 26 (33.6 percent) say they are librarians, while the remainder (n=47, 64.4 percent) provide the name of another profession. These figures correspond roughly to the number of respondents who report having a master's degree in library science (30 individuals, 41 percent).

Table 1
Positions Held by Respondents

	Number	*Percent*
Administrative/General Management	15	20.27
Automation	2	2.70
Budgeting/Fiscal/Business Manager	8	10.81
Development/Fundraising	2	2.70
Personnel	17	22.97
Planning/Research	4	5.41
Public Relations	12	16.22
Systems Analysis	9	12.16
Other	5	6.76
TOTAL	74	100.00

Public relations or community relations librarians comprise the third most numerous category with 12 individuals (16 percent) holding these positions. Twelve percent hold positions such as systems analysts. Next in number come a group of individuals who work with budgets and finances; 11 percent are in positions such as budgeting officer, fiscal officer, or business manager. A smaller number of individuals hold positions in planning or research, development or fundraising, and automation. (For a complete summary of positions held see Table 1.)

The majority of the respondents (63 percent) report directly to the library director, while one-fourth report to either an assistant or associate

Males hold these specialist positions in higher proportion than females. Fifty-nine percent (n=43) are male, while 41 percent (n=30) are female. These figures stand in sharp contrast to the overall composition of professionals in public libraries, which is 87 percent female and 13 percent male.[2] Over half of the respondents are less than 45 years of age (Table 3).

Many master's

The educational background of the respondents is varied. Ten percent (n=7) report that an associate or two-year degree is their highest degree. The rest possess at least a bachelor's degree. Indeed, 50 (71.4 percent) have a master's degree, and, as reported above, 30 of these have a master's in library or information science. Four respondents possess two master's while five report a master's and a certificate of advanced study or its equivalent (sixth-year degree). One respondent holds a Ph.D.

Almost all are active in some sort of professional activity. Seventy-seven percent (n=56) report membership in at least one professional organization, and most of them (n=40) belong to more than two. The mean number of professional memberships for the respondents as a whole is 1.8, while the average for those reporting memberships is 2.4.

Sixty-four percent (n=36) belong exclusively to library or information science professional organizations, while 20 percent (n=11) belong only to nonlibrary professional organizations. Fourteen percent (n=10) belong to both library and nonlibrary professional organizations. Many respondents report being very active in these organizations, serving as officers, presenting papers, and working on committees.

Civic and professional activity

Only five respondents (seven percent) did *not* attend at least one professional conference, workshop, institute, or seminar of at least one day's duration in the last 12 months. Forty-five percent (n=33) attended one or two such meetings, 27 percent (n=20) attended three or four, while 21 percent (n=15) attended five or more.

Many of the respondents have written for publication in the last five years. Twenty-seven (37.5 percent) report at least one publication, with the greatest number reporting two or three publications in the preceding five-year period.

Respondents as a group are less active in political, civic, and service organizations than in professional activities, although 62 percent report membership in at least one organization of these types, and 16 engage in such activities as serving on committees or working on projects.

Career patterns

The career progression of these administrators does not appear to follow one set pattern. Analysis of previous positions reveals that 46 percent (n=34) held their past three full-time positions in a library, either in the one where they are presently employed or in another one. A greater number (54 percent) worked in an institution other than a library before they moved into a library position.

Table 2
Respondents' Supervisory Responsibilities

Categories Supervised	*Number*	*Percent*
Clerical	58	78.38
Paraprofessional	22	29.73
Professional	35	47.30
Volunteers	6	8.10
Custodians	9	12.16
Technical Workers/Technicians	12	16.21
Other	2	2.70

By and large, the respondents are not a highly mobile group. Sixty-eight percent (n=47) have not made a geographic move of at least 50 miles during the period they have held their last three positions. These individuals either changed positions within the same library or worked in different institutions in the same geographic location. Nineteen percent (n=13) made at least one move during this period, one percent (n=7) made two moves, and only three percent (n=2) made a geographic move over 50 miles for each of their last three positions.

The mean number of years spent in their present position is 7.1, while the mean number of years spent in their present institution is 10.6. Again the results show a group of individuals who are not job hopping but are fairly stable both in their current positions and in their current institutions.

For the group as a whole, mobility appears more likely to occur within an institution rather than between institutions or between different types of organizations. This finding stands in contrast to the occupational aspirations of respondents. When asked the types of positions they would like to be holding five years from now, only 48 percent indicate that they would like still to be working in a library. Fourteen percent expect to be retired.

More than one-third (n=35, 38 percent) would like to be working in an institution other than a library. It is interesting that such a large percentage want to leave libraries, and this finding may be related to the satisfaction in their present job.

Job satisfaction

Respondents were asked to identify the most satisfying and least satisfying aspects of their current jobs. As can be imagined, there is a wide range of responses. In describing the most satisfying aspect of their present job, over 25 percent (n=18) list items that relate to the job itself, the actual duties or tasks they perform in their present positions.

Table 3
Age of Respondents

	Number	*Percent*
25–34	18	24.66
35–44	21	28.77
45–54	18	24.66
55–64	13	17.80
Over 65	3	4.11
TOTAL	73	100.00

An equal number report the most satisfying aspect to be the feeling of achievement or success they derive from their jobs. A smaller number indicate that the most satisfying elements are factors related to interpersonal relationships on the job (n=12), job responsibility (n=9), or the possibility of personal growth (n=7). No other category of response is listed by more than three respondents.

In looking at the *least* satisfying aspects of the jobs held by these specialty administrators, it is interesting (and dismaying) to learn that the most dissatisfying factors are those related to actual tasks involved in the job itself. Nearly 41 percent (n=25) list, as the least satisfying aspect of the job, tasks they do as part of their job responsibilities.

The next most common source of job dissatisfaction is the actual working conditions under which some individuals' jobs are performed. Approximately 20 percent (n=20) consider working conditions the least satisfying aspect of their jobs. Another ten report that the least satisfying aspect of their job is poor interpersonal relationships with either supervisors, subordinates, or peers. Smaller numbers of respondents list: salary, supervisors, lack of recognition, and lack of opportunity for advancement.

A third would leave libraries

It is disconcerting that over a third of these specialty administrators in public libraries aspire to leave library work, and it appears that approximately 40 percent of the entire group of these professionals consider the basic tasks required of their jobs to be the least satisfying aspect of their positions.

The data are by no means definitive, but they would appear to suggest the necessity for further, in-depth examination of the nature of the jobs performed by such specialists and whether such techniques as job enhancement and job enrichment might be employed to make these positions more stimulating and intrinsically worthwhile to the individuals who perform them.

Recognizing the difference

As public libraries continue to become more complex, and as their services become more varied, it seems likely that more of these specialized administrators will be hired by large libraries. As the results of this survey show, these administrators have characteristics different from those of the typical professional librarian whose expertise and background have usually been attained through traditional channels of library education and previous library experience.

These differences in education and experience should be recognized and discussed by traditional library administrators, library staff, and the specialty administrators themselves. It seems clear that additional information is needed in order to promote and maintain adequate levels of job satisfaction among these specialized administrators.

Further research needs to be done on topics such as possible differences in attitudes toward library service and the effects of specialty administrators on organizational environments in an effort to lead to a better understanding of these critically needed yet largely invisible members of the public library workforce.

References

1. For a related study on specialty administrators in academic libraries, see Association of Research Libraries. *Specialty Positions in ARL Libraries* (SPEC Kit No. 80). Association of Research Libraries, 1982.
2. NCES/OLCT Library Human Resources Employer Survey, 1982, reported in *Library Human Resources: a Study of Supply and Demand.* American Library Assn., 1983, p. 41.